



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 707 – Office of the Comptroller – Taxpayer Advocate Division

DATE: March 14, 2023
COMMITTEE: House Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committees to give HB 707 – Office of the Comptroller – Taxpayer Advocate Division a favorable report.

HB 707 aims to transform the Comptroller’s Ombudsman Office into a Taxpayer Advocate Office and employ a minimum of six workers to assist residents with debt collection, tax programs and other issues. Historically, the Ombudsman Office has served as a liaison between the Comptroller and taxpayers and is currently a three-member team.

As a leader in local government, I know how important it is to have a strong team working to serve the needs of constituents. Navigating the many services within the Comptroller’s office can be confusing for constituents and there is a growing need to increase ease and efficiency in the filing of tax returns. By reforming and expanding this office to align better with models adopted by many private entities and the IRS, HB 707 will help ensure this agency can provide the customer service needed by Maryland taxpayers.

This bill also designates the leader of the Taxpayer Advocate Division as an advisor to the Comptroller, ensuring that a chief mission of the agency is always customer engagement and service.

This legislation promotes good governance, efficient public service, and constituent-focused problem solving. As a local partner, I look forward to the opportunity to collaborate and coordinate with the Taxpayer Advocate Division and the Office of the Comptroller.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 707 and I urge a favorable report.

Respectfully,

Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD